

COMMUNIQUE

Fall, 2013

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Dr. Paul Schrodt: Communication Inspiration

Dr. Paul Schrodt, visited campus as the Fall 2013 “Above and Beyond” speaker, sharing his research and knowledge of the discipline. During his two day visit in October, he interacted with undergraduate and graduate students, both in and out of the classroom. He then presented a campus-wide lecture on *Coparental Communication as a Risk Mechanism in Post-divorce and Intact Families*. His research results detailed communication behaviors that facilitate healthy step parent-step child relationships, as well as the improvement of coparenting relationships within the



Drs. Helen Sterk & Paul Schrodt at Faculty House

family.

Dr. Paul Schrodt acquired a B.A. at the University of

Texas-Arlington, a M.S. at the University of North

- Cont'd on page 2

WKU-Glasgow Speech Contest

On Saturday, November 2nd, the inaugural WKU-Glasgow Speech Contest took place

at the Glasgow campus. Students from COMM 145: Fundamentals of Public

Speaking and COMM 161: Business & Professional Speaking participated in the event. These students were chosen either by their class or their instructor to be a part of the event based on an exemplary speech given in their respective classes earlier in the semester. COMM 145 students competing



Tyler Scaff, Dakota Thise, Zachary Brown, Jody Dahmer, Alexandria Staples, & Marie Angeles

- Cont'd on page 2

Dr. Paul Schrodt ... *cont'd*


Texas, and a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is currently an Associate Professor of Communication Studies and Director of Graduate Studies at Texas Christian University. Dr. Schrodt has published over sixty articles in leading journals. Among his accomplishments, he was awarded the 2012 Bernard J. Brommel Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Family Communication and the 2011 Early Career Award in Interpersonal Communication, both from the National Communication Association. He is a lifetime member of the National Communication Association (NCA) and the Central States Communication Association (CSCA), as well as a member of the International Association for Relationship Research (IARR).


In an interview, Dr. Schrodt discussed his values as a Christian, husband and father. His attitude and passion for those values, as well as the importance of educating were certainly obvious as he spoke on the rewards of watching students grow. "The meaningfulness comes from the human connection in the relationships that we cultivate, in what we are doing," he explained. Department of Communication Head, Dr. Helen Sterk commented "Dr. Paul Schrodt embodies the best in Communication

Paul Schrodt, Ph.D.
Monday, October 14, 2013

Like a Bone Between Two Dogs:
Interparental Conflict, Feelings of Being Caught,
and Young Adult Children's Mental Well-being

11:30 a.m.
FAC 137






Putting the "Family" back into Family Communications:
Research Designs and Units of Analysis


12:30 p.m.
Faculty House

The Tie That Binds:
Coparental Communication as a Risk Mechanism in Post-Divorce and Intact Families


7:00 p.m.
GRH Auditorium,
Room #1074



All three are swipeable events



Paul Schrodt, Ph.D.
Texas Christian University





Dr. Paul Schrodt gives evening lecture to students & faculty

scholarship—a sense of people’s humanity, the fears and needs and dreams that motivate communication, and an understanding of the value of communication in creating new and healing broken relationships.” Dr. Schrodt will certainly continue to inspire and grow along with the many lives he influences.

~Jeremy Cowles, Student

WKU-Glasgow... *cont'd*

in the event delivered their Speech of Information & Diversity, while each COMM 161 students delivered their Informative Business Presentation. The contest consisted of three rounds, with the final rounds determining a finalist’s placement. COMM 145 and COMM 161 were split into two separate categories and students earning 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place received financial awards, as well as a certificate. 1st place winners were awarded \$250, 2nd place winners received \$100, and 3rd place finalists received \$50.

Throughout the event, Big Red

posed for photos with students and guests, door prizes were given away, and the students and their guests ate and relaxed between rounds.

During the final round, the finalists’ speeches were judged by Celebrity Judges Dr. Helen Sterk, Dr. Sally Ray, Mayor Rhonda Trautman (Mayor of Glasgow), and Ernie Myers (Glasgow-Barren County Chamber of Commerce President).

The finalists for COMM 145 were: 1st place - Alexandria Staples, whose instructor is Ivan Gan, 2nd place - Jody Dahmer, whose in-

structor is Donna Schiess, and 3rd place - Zachary Brown, whose instructor is Gary Hughes.

The finalists for COMM 161 were: 1st place - Tyler Scaff, whose instructor is Bruce Crawley, 2nd place - Dakota Thise, whose instructor is Stacey Gish, and 3rd place - Marie Angeles, whose instructor is Gayle Allison.

The event was a great success and we hope to continue offering the WKU-Glasgow Speech Contest every fall.

~Patricia Witcher, Instructor

Message from Helen Sterk, Department Head



Dr. Helen Sterk

During the fall semester and winter term, the Department of Communication crackled with life. We hosted a Scholar in Residence--Dr. Paul Schrod, held a bonfire and pig roast at Prof. Elder's house, participated in homecoming activities, developed new graduate program possibilities, and launched a Study Abroad program in Australia.

Probably the biggest news was the roll out of our COMM 200: Foundations of Communication app. Departmental professors, under the leadership of Dr. Thompson, wrote chapters, assignments and applications of key Communication theories. Their writing was transformed into an app, available online, over tablets, or on smartphones. Students eagerly took to the app, finding it something they could read wherever they were, quite unlike a textbook. In the coming years, the authors will look for ways to share this app with other schools beyond WKU.

Students and faculty members engaged in scholarship, earning grants and presenting at conferences. Faculty member Dr. Payne, and graduate students Ivan Gan, Ryan Cummings, and Erin Grenke all won top paper honors at the National Com-

munication Association conference in Washington, D. C. Drs. Thompson, Payne and Jerome won a WKU Research and Creative Activities Program (RCAP) grant to support research into schools' crisis communication. Dr. Angie Jerome's spring sabbatical project on sport communication won a WKU RCAP grant to help her with researching and writing a book on the topic. Dr. Kell received a publication acceptance for his fourth university press book in 15 years on the rhetorical history of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dr. Schiess took twelve students to Australia during winter term and Dr. Kong taught an online Intercultural Communication class to the same students, offering students a total of six hours of credit during the winter term. Deakin University, in Marnmool, hosted the WKU contingent, connecting them with Aboriginal leaders.

Each of these events brought a new set of opportunities to our students. No matter whether your interest is social, research, or travel, the WKU Department of Communication has a place for you!

Tackling the "R" Word

A new course was added to the communication department this semester that some may consider out of bounds. COMM 450 – Special Topics: Interracial Communication tackles issues many people are still uncomfortable facing head on. "The 'R' word (meaning race) is almost considered a taboo topic," Dr. Mittie Carey explained.

Because talking about race often makes people uncomfortable, it was important to Dr. Carey to set up an

atmosphere of trust for her students. At the start of the semester, she conducted many icebreakers and interactive activities to make students feel free to express beliefs as equals and without fear of judgment. Most class periods are spent in circles allowing for open discussion to take place. The class often participates in fish-bowl discussions, where two people begin a conversation in the middle of a circle so that everyone is observing, just like fish in a bowl. Eventually

other students also move into the "bowl" to contribute to the discussion.

Dr. Carey felt it was important to construct COMM 400 in a way that prepared students to work and thrive in an interracial society and to communicate across all racial lines. This new course begins with the history of race and moves on to cover interracial relationships in corporations, romantic relationships, and friend-

Tackling the “R” Word... *cont'd*

ships. Students are encouraged to form their own opinions without worrying if their grades will be affected negatively.

Traditionally, race is not something that is openly talked about, but this course shows that it should be. As Dr. Carey pointed out, “We are all

different and there is nothing wrong with those differences. I’m black, you are white. My hair is curly, yours is straight. Since there is nothing wrong with these differences, we should feel comfortable talking about them.”

So far, the feedback for Interracial Communication has been very posi-

tive. Dr. Carey wishes that more students of all races would take the course. It provides exposure and opportunity to hear the words of others with different experiences. Students are given the chance to voice their opinions and examine themselves and what they believe. As a class, they

discuss why cultural and racial groups view things differently, and how perception isn't always reality. This course allows for an open opportunity for transformative discussion that will hopefully be followed by transformational perspectives and ideas.

~Brittany Bray, Student



Drs. Mittie Carey and Jieyoung Kong having a fish bowl discussion

Internships Catapulting Careers Forward

This fall, the Department of Communication hosted an “Interns on Interning” panel. Students gathered in the Faculty house, where they were given the opportunity to gain insight from internship veterans. A panel of six students shared their experiences with the group, and it was exciting to hear the variety of internships that students from WKU have filled. From internships with Landshark Shredding to WKU Athletic Department, students are out in our community applying skills learned here on The Hill.

The students shared how their Communication degrees have catapulted their careers forward and their

participation in their internships has helped to narrow down what careers they hope to pursue. WKU Communication Studies senior, Eric Sapp, said he hopes to make strong networking connections and gain valuable job experience during his summer 2014 internship. Eric is looking forward to working for an insurance company and hopes to learn more about this field to better decide if it will be the right fit for him. He also mentioned how he hopes his internship will lead to a full-time job after college.

Dr. Carl Kell, Director of Internships, strongly believes that an internship can help students achieve their

professional goals and has the potential to launch their careers. The key to all this is finding the right internship. Many Communication students walk into his office unsure of what opportunities are out there for their major, but the possibilities are endless. Dr. Kell spoke of how the Department of Communication equips students to enter almost any organization with a toolbox full of strategies to improve the communication climate and to promote more effective communication, making Communication majors essential at the most basic level of an organization and up. Students who are undecided if an internship would be a beneficial endeavor should con-

- *Cont'd on page 5*

Internships... *cont'd*

sider how an internship provides a link between academic learning and professional employment.

Most students are unaware of the processes involved in obtaining an internship. Those students interested in registering for the Spring 2014 internship course should schedule an appointment with Dr. Carl Kell to discuss potential internship placements. If your organization is interested in hosting a communication intern, contact Dr. Carl Kell at (270)745-5883.

~ *Kaitlyn Soler, Student*



Pictured left to right: Natalie Gilliam, Angelia Whitlock, Susanne Hauser, Olivia Dorris, Jordan Boggs, Paul Buhrmester

2nd Annual Department of Communication Bonfire

For the second year in a row, Ms. Charlotte Elder hosted the Department of Communication Bonfire. This event is the perfect opportunity for students, alumni, and professors to join together for a night of great fun. Approximately 40 people gathered on Wednesday, November 13th

for marshmallow roasting, hot chocolate and great conversation. Everyone grabbed their chairs and blankets for a cold night by the warm fire. This year the bonfire had a new act to add to the festivities, Happy Gas! According to Happy Gas member, Angelia Whitlock, "Happy Gas

Improv Troupe is Kentucky's longest running improvisational comedy troupe. With audience suggestions, we create and build scenes and entire stories without script or prior rehearsal." This interactive group brought an exciting new twist to the bonfire and left everyone laughing. Members of Happy Gas present at the bonfire were President Nick Benson, Stephen Korfhage, Chris Embry, and Angelia Whitlock. From Happy Gas to the roasting pig, the bonfire is anything but boring. Communication student Ryan DeMuth said when asked what his favorite part of the annual bonfire is stated, "I would have to say just being able to see a great group of faculty and students be able to kill some stress and hang out together." The annual bonfire is a new tradition for the Department of Communication that both students and professors hope will continue and grow in the years to come.

~ *Haley Baseheart, Student*



Happy Gas performing at the 2nd Annual Bonfire

Life After Graduation... What's Next?

For many college students, surviving undergrad is enough of a challenge in itself, not to mention thoughts on attending graduate school. In the growing and fast moving society we live in today, a graduate degree continues to become more valuable. A master's degree in combination with a bachelor's degree is a powerful duo.

A common myth about obtaining a Master's degree in Communication is that the only need for one is for an academic career path. According to the Director of the Communication Graduate Program, Dr. Holly Payne, only a small handful of current graduate students plan to continue their education after they receive their master's degrees. The majority of students plan to enter the workforce and use their graduate

training to begin or further their careers in a variety of organizational settings.

The current graduate program of study offered is a Masters of Arts in Organizational Communication. There are 34 hours required to complete the program. The breakdown of the hours include: 10 hours of core courses, 12 hours of organizational communication electives, 6 hours of human communication electives, and 6 hours of capstone options. The non-thesis capstone requires six additional hours of electives, as well as completing a written comprehensive exam. The thesis capstone option requires thesis research and writing, as well as an oral defense of the project.

Admission to the program requires both an application and test scores. The application materials include an

application, official transcripts, GRE scores, a writing sample from an undergraduate course, and a letter of intent. Students must have earned a minimum score of 139 on the Verbal and Quantitative sections of the GRE. Additionally, students must have a GAP score of at least 550 [GAP = (Overall GRE score) + (Undergraduate GPA X 100)] and a minimum score of 3.5 on the analytical writing section of the GRE.

Any further information concerning the program can be found on the department website, www.wku.edu/communication/graduate_program/index.php, and any questions can be directed to the Graduate Director, Dr. Holly Payne, at holly.payne@wku.edu.

~Cassandra Oliverio, Student

COMM 200 Appdate

The COMM 200 app debuted in the fall of 2013. WKU faculty designed the app for the Communication Foundations class, replacing the traditional college textbook. Several Communication professors wrote the content, led by Dr. Blair Thompson. After interviewing a handful of students who are currently taking the class, I found the general consensus is that the app is liked. While some students expressed an interest in having the option of a hard copy text, most liked the fact of having one less book to lug up the hill! One student remarked, "I would love to only have to carry my iPad."

The quality and the varying functions of the app seem to be well liked by the students. Although they admitted that the app sometimes would lock up or close unexpectedly, they were understanding of the fact that it's new. New technology is always going to encounter some bugs and glitches. Nearly all of the students

agreed that the app would be successful once a few minor problems were worked out. The students were also pleased with other features of the app, saying "it is more than a book."

It wasn't surprising to hear that no one felt like there would be a time that apps would replace all textbooks. However, there was a time when the general consensus was that the world was flat and putting a man on the moon was impossible. The students in the Depart-



Students using app in class

ment of Communication are very fortunate to have an incredible faculty that creates a brand new class, writes the textbook, and then turns it into an app! With that type of commitment, who knows what they'll be able to accomplish next.

~Jason Weeks, Student

Real-World Experiences an Essential Part of Advanced Organizational Communication Course Curriculum

“Hands-on” experiences tend to be a classroom favorite across the nation, immediately grasping the attention of all of those who are participating. Sure, textbook philosophy and theories are significant, but the best way to prepare for a future career in communication is to experience real world expertise outside of the classroom.

Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith, Communication professor for Fall 2013, also believes this to be true. In fact, she has even gone so far as to include “hands-on” experience in her curriculum for the COMM 462 course, creating class field trips to various businesses within the Bowling Green community. “I designed the class to encourage students to apply the material and then see organizational communication aspects in action, in a real world setting and organizations....and I thought the best way to do that was to go and visit the organizations themselves. Sometimes, professors bring in guest speakers, but I wanted to actually go visit those key individuals in organizations, so that my students could see what it really means to apply core organizational communication concepts to real-life in a natural environment. It really adds a different dimension to how students are able to learn and devel-



COMM 462 class being spoken to by Mr. William Skaggs, Annual Fund Director for Annual Giving, at the Augenstein Alumni Center

The best way to prepare for a future career in communication is to experience real world expertise outside of the classroom.

op their ideas and thought processes regarding what we initially learn in class,” said Dr. Mize Smith. The Advanced Organizational Communication professor says that these class field trips, which have been to the WKU Augenstein Alumni Center, BB&T, and Logan Aluminum, have definitely illustrated key organizational communication concepts, such as socialization, work-life balance, organizational identification, and organizational culture--- concepts that were first introduced to

students via weekly article readings, application papers, and journal reflections.

When asked within the classroom as to whether or not they appreciated, valued, and learned from the field trips, the COMM 462 students agreed, saying that they wished other professors would incorporate field trips into their class curriculum. Dr. Mize Smith believes the field trips to be successful thus far, and hopes to continue incorporating field trips into the Advanced Organizational Communication curriculum in future semesters, allowing her students to apply classroom learning to realistic situations.

~ Monet Becker, Student

Student Profile

Conquering. Joking. Tenacious. “CJ Thomas”



Cameron “CJ” Thomas

Twenty-two year old Cameron “CJ” Thomas was born in Patterson, New Jersey. A senior at Western Kentucky University, CJ majors in Communication Studies and minors in Athletic Coaching. CJ has been a proud athlete of WKU’s football team for 4 years, sporting jersey number 19, corner back position and now serves as a first year Team Captain.

CJ is self-driven and extremely involved within his department and football team but enjoys his free time. During his spare time, CJ likes to hang out with his teammates, aka “brothers,” and have quality time with family. Balancing academics

and football is not an easy task, so time management is the key. CJ devotes time to his studies to work ahead and stay focused. Team-mates and coaches describe CJ as a charismatic leader. With enthusiasm and motivating energy, he leads by creating excitement and inspires his teammates to perform at their highest potential. Through his actions and performance on the field, CJ is an effective leader and an outstanding asset to the team.

CJ’s favorite quote is “Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the rest of the stair case.”— Martin Luther King

Jr. Applying this quote to his daily life, CJ is known to be the “motivational speaker” on the football team. Leading with his passion for the game, CJ is determined to succeed on the football field and within the classroom.

CJ has big plans to live out his dream and display his talent in the NFL. He also plans to use his communication degree by serving as a sports analyst or radio spokesman. CJ will be the first in his family to graduate from college. Living his grandfather’s legacy and family dream, CJ will graduate with a degree in Communication Studies and Athletic Coaching.

~ Paige Freeman, Student

Living his grandfather’s legacy and family dream, CJ will graduate with a degree in Communication Studies & Athletic Coaching.

LAMBDA PI ETA (ΛΠΗ)



**Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith—
Faculty Advisor**

The goals of Lambda Pi Eta, the Department of Communication’s honor society, are to create interest in the field of communication, foster relationships between faculty and students, and share ideas about communication. One way LPH accomplishes these goals is by creating opportunities that allow for conversation about the Communication discipline to occur. This semester Lambda Pi Eta has accomplished these goals by sponsoring several events for recruiting new members, interacting with visiting scholars as well as communicating with faculty members within the communication department, and, finally, by attending the National Communication Association conference in Washington D.C.

The semester started off with a recruitment luncheon for prospective members to inquire about the organization. In order to be invited to the organization, the student must complete 60 hours of college credit; 12 hours must be in the communication discipline. The student must also have 3.0 cumulative GPA and a 3.25

within the Communication discipline. Needless to say an invitation to Lambda Pi Eta is quite an honor.

In October, Lambda Pi Eta members had the opportunity to meet with visiting scholar Dr. Paul Schrodt of Texas Christian University who presented his research in family communication. He also took time out of his schedule to discuss graduate school with LPH members and graduate students in the communication department. In November, Lambda Pi Eta hosted a department-wide ReVerb with communication faculty. Students were invited to hear presentations about faculty research interests and methodologies. The faculty members who presented were Dr. Sterk, Dr. Payne, Dr. Car-

ey, Dr. Thompson, and graduate student Heidi Sisler. The ReVerb is unique because it allows faculty mem-

bers to express their passion about their research interests with students. It also allows students to develop a greater appreciation for the scholarly research conducted with in the communication department.

One highlight of the semester was the National Communication Association convention held in Washington, D.C. Several officers of Lambda Pi Eta were able to accompany the Communication faculty to the conference: Mattie Russell, Presi-

dent; Chelsea Martin, Vice President; Natalie Gilliam, Secretary/Treasurer; and Haley Henderson, Scholarship Chair. This opportunity allowed the officers to meet other members of Lambda Pi Eta across the nation. The officers also had the opportunity to listen to research presentations by leading scholars in the Communication discipline.

As the semester closes, it is evident that the scholarly conversations about Communication are lively. Looking to the spring semester, the officers of Lambda Pi Eta are excited for the conversation about Communication to continue and the events that will make that happen.



Chelsea Martin, Mattie Russell, Haley Henderson, & Natalie Gilliam at Lincoln Memorial during NCA Convention

*~ Emily Foust, Student
LPH Public Relations Chair*

COMMUNICATION ORGANIZATION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS (COGS)



Dr. Holly Payne—Faculty Advisor

The Communication Organization for Graduate Students (COGS) exists to serve graduate students in the Masters of Organizational Communication. Three graduate students serve as officers, Felix Perrone (President), Daniela Fuentes (Vice-President), and Katie Fane (Secretary). In addition, Dr. Holly Payne serves as the Faculty Advisor.

As the life of a Communication graduate student can prove to be very busy and challenging, COGS desires to provide meaningful opportunities for students to network and help one another in their different endeavors. We do so in a variety of ways. Primarily, we hold meetings the last Monday of every month. These meetings are designed to

share information about what the Department of Communication is doing (e.g. visiting scholars, webinars, etc.), to create fellowship among students, and to exchange experiences that will help students as they work their way through the graduate program. We also provide workshops and class reviews when graduate students express a need for them. Workshops may include topics such as thesis writing, how to study for COMPS, etc.

Recently, COGS initiated the planning of a webinar, “How to Write Literature Reviews” conducted by Dr. Sonja Foss (University of Colorado, Denver) and Dr. William Waters (University of Houston, Downtown) authors of the book, *Destination Dissertation*. The webinar workshop provided an interesting technique for literature review writing that will help graduate students in writing final course papers as well as theses.

COGS also supports lectures sponsored by the Communication Department, and creates opportunities for students to continue discussing what they learned during those events through the department’s ReVerb series. COGS hosted a Re-

Verb event based on the department’s guest lecturer, Dr. Paul Schrod. The event involved the creation of interactive posters which included quotes from Dr. Schodt’s lectures and questions for students to address in pen form on the poster itself. It was a great success, and truly kept the conversation going. We were very excited to read all the comments students left on the posters, and we look forward to doing a similar activity next semester.

In addition to attending the lectures given by Dr. Paul Schrod on step-family communication, COGS members had the opportunity to meet with him privately to ask about his research and seek advice on thesis topics. We truly enjoyed getting to meet Dr. Schrod!

In December, the current officers of the COGS eagerly anticipated the end of the semester outing event, where students enjoyed dinner together and celebrated their accomplishments throughout the semester.

~ Daniela Fuentes, Graduate Assistant



Conventions

NCA: Making Connections in Washington, DC

The National Communication Association's (NCA) 99th annual convention was held in Washington, DC this past November. The convention's theme, "DC Connections," centered around the issues and sites of our nation's capital. Department Head, Dr. Helen Sterk, said that "every convention takes on its own flavor of the city. Starting the opening night with a political satire group, The Capitol Steps, made the convention feel very true to the city. The theme of Connections helped highlight communication from the personal up to the political."

Politics were a common theme of this convention. One panel highlighted the media's portrayal of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and the communication breakdowns that occurred. Many research panels centered around JFK as the convention took place on the weekend of the 50th anniversary of his assassination. Attending WKU student, Haley Henderson, a senior from Lexington, Kentucky said, "It was truly incredible to be a part of that historical anniversary."

NCA provides a way for both students and faculty to become more immersed in the discipline and to gain knowledge and perspective from some of the top scholars. Dr. Angie Jerome said, "The thing I enjoy the most about academic conferences is the social interaction I get to engage in with other scholars

in the discipline. It is always cool to interact with people who write the articles my students read for class assignments."

Dr. Jerome has presented at NCA numerous times. This past convention, she presented on a panel with Dr. Blair Thompson, Dr. Holly Payne, and graduate student, Daniella Fuentes about



school crisis communication. Dr. Jerome says each time she presents "provides a new learning experience and opportunity to share my work with my peers and mentors across the discipline, discuss scholarly trends in my field, and receive valuable feedback from other scholars on my research." Dr. Sterk recognized faculty for their participation in NCA, saying, "I am very pleased with our department's level of involvement. Not only do faculty members present papers, they also chair, plan programs, and help run their sub-areas. Because of that, they are making a difference in the

organization, helping it to serve scholars in years to come. Our students, from Lambda Pi Eta to graduate students, attend and present papers, learning firsthand from the authors they read."

There are major benefits for students to attend the NCA convention. Dr. Jerome mentioned, "It is also extremely intriguing to watch my students experience their first conference. I am so proud watching them present their work, receiving awards, and having them realize that they are among the top scholars in the discipline." Ivan Gan, a second-year graduate student from Singapore, presented his paper and received a top student paper honor.

Everyone in attendance at this year's convention was able to create meaningful connections to their discipline and come home energized. Next year, the NCA convention will be held in Chicago at the Palmer House Hilton hotel.

~ Natalie Gilliam, Student



Alumni Focus

Alumni Focus: Doris Moody

Doris Moody was recognized at the 2013 Summit Award Banquet for being one of WKU's Volunteer of the Year recipients. She is a 1996 graduate with a masters degree in Communication Studies, and is president of the Department of Communication's alumni council.

The alumni council was formed in May, 2013. Ms. Moody was one of the founding members and has led the board through its beginning steps—writing and approving bylaws, creating an 'executive in residence' proposal for the department, and developing new membership. As president of the council, she directs the executive committee, sets agendas, develops plans for growth, and encourages support of the department.

Ms. Moody is Human Resources Team Leader at Logan Aluminum,



President Gary Ransdell, Doris Moody, & Dr. Helen Sterk

where she manages human resource development, including organizational strategy and long range planning. She has consulted with Logan Aluminum on work systems de-

signs, organizational culture, participative management, change management, and human resource development.

~ Laura Wagoner

The Sweetest Comeback in the History of Ever!



Michael Mullins

lost one of the great snack foods, the Twinkie. However, on July 15, 2013 Hostess Brands returned to shelves and restored not only the Twinkie, but also all products in the campaign they coined "The Sweetest Comeback in the History of Ever." One of our own graduates, Michael Mullins, played a key role in the comeback.

Mike attended WKU from 1982 to May of 1986, when he graduated with a major in Speech Communication and a minor in Business Man-

agement. Before joining Hostess Brands, he spent the majority of his 27-year career in the Consumer Package Goods (CPG) Industry. His experience includes operating as a sales executive, managing iconic corporations such as Quaker Oats Co., PepsiCo, Gatorade and Tropicana. During his time in these positions, Mike worked with national accounts and customers through various channels. Before joining the Hostess Brands team,

In 2012, America thought it had

- Cont'd page 13

The Sweetest Comeback... *cont'd*

he left PepsiCo for an opportunity to run all of sales across North America for a small natural food company. However, Mike ultimately decided to return to major CPG organizations and is now the Division Vice President for the Central Division of Hostess Brands. In this position, he leads the Hostess Sales and Operation Organization for the central region of the United States.

In order to succeed in this high position, Mike placed a lot of emphasis on what he learned at WKU, specifically in the Department of Communication. When asked if he felt that the Department had given him the proper

materials to thrive after graduation he responded, "Absolutely! Communication is a quintessential ingredient for success in everything we do, whether it is professionally or personally.... Skills and lessons that I learned from my professors helped to establish my communication competencies." The greatest advice he could give to current students is to work hard and play smart. This means to take full advantage of what college offers and use it to prepare for the world after college. He also stated to "be a sponge and learn as much as you can from your professors."

With all of the hard work and experience that he has gained after graduation, Mike wanted to share three aspects that can lead to success: 1) Stay connected and grounded with your family, friends, and mentors 2) Go with your gut, be true to your values and instincts, and to never sacrifice your ethics 3) Effective communication is key to success—learn when to speak and learn when to listen. Reflecting on his immense experience and success, it seems as if Mike has followed his own advice and continues to keep the "sweetest comeback" alive.

~Leigh Ann Rush, Student

A Hero among Us: Byron Turner

"Oh, my gosh! Leslie, are you okay?"

What would you do if you were talking to someone and heard a co-worker's head hit the wall then hit the ground? That is what Byron Turner experienced on May 30, 2013. He is a Western Kentucky University graduate from Nashville, Tennessee, who is currently in law school at Northern Kentucky University. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Political Science and a minor in Communication Studies.

Most people wake up in the morning, get ready for work and think it's going to be a normal day, which is what Byron probably thought as well. He went to work at the Warren County Justice Center that morning doing his daily job, where he was a law clerk and helped anyone in court if they needed it.

It was a Friday afternoon after the office had closed, and the employees were standing around talking. That was when they heard the thud and rushed into Mr. Leslie Bucklew's of-



Byron Turner

fice. Bonnie Robbins, an office assistant, was in Mr. Bucklew's office talking to him when the heart attack occurred. Byron said as soon as he heard the thud, he and Attorney Blake Chambers rushed into Mr. Bucklew's office. They flipped him

over and noticed he wasn't breathing. They tried to wake him up to see if he was conscious, but no response occurred.

"My training just kicked in, and I just started doing CPR," stated Byron. Byron explained he got certified in CPR but had never had to apply his training to any real life situation, until Mr. Bucklew's heart attack.

It wasn't until the next day that everyone found out how serious the damage was. Mr. Bucklew ended up having quintuple bypass surgery. Byron said he continues to stay in touch with Mr. Bucklew who is recovering well.

Following the incident, Byron was named a Bowling Green Hometown Hero by local television station WBKO. "I greatly appreciate the title of 'hero', but at the same time, I feel as though there are many others who are worthier of the title than myself," stated Byron. Byron's modesty is genuine, but 'hero' certainly seems to fitting for someone who saved the life of another. I think Mr. Bucklew would agree.

~ Emily Woosley, Student

Faculty Profile: Patricia Witcher



Patricia Witcher, M.A. has just started her 11th year of teaching at Western Kentucky University, but only a certain number of students have been fortunate enough to have her as a professor. Ms. Witcher is an instructor at WKU's Glasgow campus.

Ms. Witcher received her bachelor of science in Dietetics from the University of Kentucky and worked as a dietician for six years. She often spoke at events as a dietician and eventually realized that she was no longer passionate about dietetics. Rather, she was passionate about communication. Ms. Witcher received her Master's in Communication from WKU in spring, 2002.

Ms. Witcher started teaching at WKU in fall ,2002, and spent her time teaching at both the main campus and the Glasgow campus. Soon

after, Ms. Witcher accepted a full time position at the Glasgow campus. "I really liked the atmosphere and student makeup at the Glasgow campus," Ms. Witcher added.

While the Glasgow campus is a part of the WKU community, Ms. Witcher points out that the atmosphere is a little different. The Glasgow campus has a mix of traditional and non-traditional students who come from the surrounding ten counties, and also three Tennessee counties. "Currently, there are only a few clubs and organizations,

which allows students to focus more on their studies. Many students have families at home and

speaking, and intercultural communication; however, she noted that her favorite course to teach is intercultural communication. "I am really fascinated by other cultures and the relationship between communication and culture," Ms. Witcher commented. She also likes to examine the communication similarities and differences between other cultures and our own. "I firmly believe that we can learn so much from each other and develop a greater appreciation for diversity when we take the time to learn about the world around us," she claimed.

Ms. Witcher also coordinated the first Communication Speech Contest at the Glasgow campus, which took place November 2, 2013. This speech contest resembles the John Lyne Speech Contest that takes place during the spring semester at WKU's main campus. Each introductory public speaking

course selected a student with the strongest speech to represent their class at the contest. The contest attracted twenty students, and Ms. Witcher believes it was a great success and

hopes to continue offering the event every fall.

"I am really fascinated by other cultures and the relationship between communication and culture."

finishing their degree as quickly as possible is very important to them," she explained.

Ms. Witcher teaches public speaking, business and professional

~ Ashley Smith, Student

Events



Above: Dr. Schrodt at 7:00 p.m. lecture

Right: Dr. Schrodt giving lecture to students at the Faculty House at 12:30 p.m.

Above & Beyond Lecture Series Dr. Paul Schrodt



Bonfire 2013



Group *Happy Gas* performed as part of the Bonfire activities

Homecoming 2013



Students with COMM Monster getting ready for parade to begin.

Homecoming Queen Candidates



Paige Freeman at parade won 1st Runner-up for Homecoming Queen.



Jordan Boggs with Ryan DeMuth and Big Red

Alumni Updates

Danielle Averill, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2010—Danielle received a M.S. in Sport Management from Florida State University, and is currently working as an Assistant Director of Compliance at the University of Tennessee.

Andrew Causey, B.A. Communication Studies, 2006—Andrew obtained an M.A. of Worship from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2009. He is currently working as a Sales Manager at Kentucky Music Company, a Nutrition/Sports Supplementation Advisor for Advocate, and the Minister of Music at Woodburn Baptist Church.

Hillary Chin, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2013—Hillary is a Sales & Marketing Coordinator at WNKY-TV in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Sara Clifton, B.A. Communication Studies, 2011—Sara is a Graduate Assistant in the M.A. College Student Counseling & Personnel Services program at the University of Louisville.

Cindy Ehresman, M.A. Communication, 2006—Cindy received her Ed.D., Educational Administration—Postsecondary Leadership from WKU in 2011. She is the Program Manager for Lifelong Learning at WKU.

Patti Grice, M.A. Organizational Communication, 2010—Patti was recently promoted to Project Manager, Retail Communication Team at Humana Inc. in Louisville, Kentucky.

Jessica Mattingly, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2013—Jessica is the Human Resources Assistant at Scotty's Contracting & Stone in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Kayla Nall, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2011—Kayla is an Account Manager at TEK Systems Marketing Services Group in Louisville, Kentucky.

Lauren Nelson, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2010—Lauren is the Director of Communication at Attain Capital Management in Chicago, Illinois.

Jessica Paulsen Hellams—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2011; M.A. Organizational Communication, 2013—Jessica is a 2013 Corps Member for Teach for America.

Nathan Pederson, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2010—Nathan works in Operations at Verizon Telematics, Inc.

Kelli Perkins, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2010—Kelli was named Account

Executive at Konica Minolta Business Solutions in Louisville, Kentucky.

Wade Pierce, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2011—Wade works in purchasing for the Kentucky region at Holston Gases.

Rebecca Schaefer, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2012—Rebecca is a Group Travel Consultant at GOGO Worldwide Vacations in the Nashville, Tennessee area.

Meredith Schultz, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2009—Meredith Schultz is an Account Executive for Lamar Outdoor Advertising in Lexington, Kentucky.

Evan Sharp, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2011—Evan is the General Manager at Griff's Deli in Louisville, Kentucky.

Joshua Wilcox, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2010—Josh is an Account Manager for JDML Marketing, Inc.

Will Zanetis, B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2011—Will is an Integrated Media Manager at Journal Communications Inc. in Nashville, Tennessee.

**Let us know what you are doing.
We would love to hear from you, too!**

Send news to Laura Wagoner at laura.wagoner@wku.edu



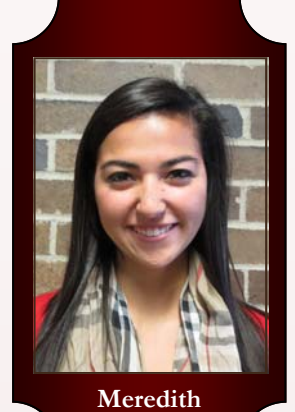
Callie Allison



Michaela Ash



Rachel Cato



Meredith
Coomes

Fall 2013

Student Workers



Bethany Hughes



Katelyn Lockett



Cody Whitlock



Madalyn
Wilbanks

Thank you!

Western Kentucky
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Department of
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